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IMPORT NEWS

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■ RECREATION

Ship-shape skatepark to dock at Lock 8

MARYANNE FIRTH
 InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — There's a new ship headed to the lakeside city. But instead of passing through the locks of the Welland Canal, it will be permanently docked at Lock 8 Park.

The park will be the site of Port Colborne's new skateboard and BMX park, cleverly designed to mimic the look of a laker passing under Bridge 21. Construction of the park was approved by city council Monday night. It will cost an estimated \$700,000 including design and construction management.

Working with LANDInc., the Port Colborne mayor's youth advisory council and local skateboarders and BMXers came together to help design the 1,079-square-metre facility.

see SKATEPARK | page 2

■ SOUP FEST: Fourth annual event draws hundreds of guests

Friendly rivalry feeds Port Cares

ALLAN BENNER
 InPort News Staff



PORT COLBORNE — They managed to avoid beating each other with baguettes, but the rivalry was obvious between the teachers of the culinary arts programs at Port Colborne and Lakeshore high schools.

Lakeshore teacher Joe Fabiano accused Port Colborne High School's Joel Culliford of an unspeakable crime, but Culliford retaliated with an accusation that was even worse.

He accused Fabiano and his students of serving soup out of a can.

see SOUP FEST | page 2

ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo
 Jen Maloney gives her son Kievan a taste of some of the soup she enjoyed Friday during Soup Fest, held Friday to benefit Port Cares.

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■ SOUP FEST

Rivalry sparked between teachers

FROM PAGE 1

Despite the harsh words, it was a friendly rivalry between the two teachers as well as their students at St. Patrick's Church hall, Friday, during the fourth annual Soup Fest — a fundraising event for Port Cares.

Each of the teachers brought four Grade 12 students with them, and some of the best soup they could brew up to serve to hungry guests.

While Lakeshore students brought La Stracciatella and a beef barley soup, Port High students went for a "diner feed" with their servings of cheeseburger soup and chicken wing soup complete with blue cheese and hot sauce.

Students from both schools put more than a full school day into their creations, which also included freshly baked buns and breads.

Fabiano said Soup Fest is an event they all look forward to, "not just because it's a good community event."

"This is actually one of the only times we actually get to see each other, even though we're just down the street," he added. "We get to chat and our kids get great experience. They give back to the community."

Students and faculty from Niagara College's food and wine institute were there, too, as well as students from Port Cares' own program that teaches food service skills to clients.

■ ENTERTAINMENT: East Coast band will headline opening day of Port Colborne's summer festival

The Trews kicking off Canal Days



Supplied photo

The Trews will kick off the 34th annual Canal Days festival in Port Colborne Aug. 3.

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — A rock band that got its start in Niagara will return to the region this summer for the Canal Days festival.

The Trews, a band that found its way onto FM radio stations after winning a 2002 contest run by St. Catharines radio station HTZ-FM, will kick off Port Colborne's four-day marine heritage festival on Friday, Aug. 3.

"We're excited," said Allaina Kane, the city's special events co-ordinator.

She said the organizers of the 34th annual festival were looking for an act that would draw people from within the

region, as well as increase tourism.

The Trews, who are originally from Canada's East Coast, were available, within budget and precisely what festival organizers were looking for to headline the first day of music on the festival's Market Square Stage.

"The Trews have had some really good stuff in the past, and they have some really good stuff now, so we know they're going to draw people of different ages," Kane said Thursday.

Festival organizers are still finalizing the musical acts that will perform throughout the rest of the festival, and they will be announced in the next few weeks.

■ SKATEPARK

Design of facility gets Port Colborne council nod

FROM PAGE 1

Along with being shaped like a laker — the bow and stern of the vessel prominent components of the design — the park includes a compass element, inverted lifeboat and water-coloured wave track made to look like a wake from the ship.

"We're quite excited with the design," said Dennis Taves, of LANDinc., who presented the design illustrations to councillors.

The ship-shaped park will be located on the south end of Lock 8 Park, with the laker running roughly parallel to the waterway, Taves said.

Ward 2 Coun. Yvon Doucet, who sits as a council representative on MYAC, credited local youths for their efforts

In designing the park.

He told council he's already heard through the grapevine that skaters and BMX bike riders from other communities are eager to use the park once it's constructed.

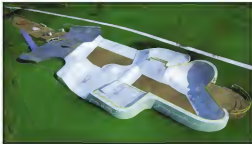
Doucet said an "aggressive schedule" has been set with hopes of seeing the park completed by September.

"This is an amazing design. I love how it fits the space," said Ward 2 Coun. Angie Desmarais.

"It speaks to all of what Port Colborne is."

Desmarais said construction costs include use of upgraded materials to accommodate shaking from vessels being lifted into the nearby locks.

"I think this is really good



Supplied illustration

LANDinc. has worked in partnership with Port Colborne's mayor's youth advisory council and local skateboarders and BMX riders to design this nautical-themed skatepark to be built at Lock 8 Park.

value," she said.

Ward 1 Coun. Bill Steele said he loves the unique

nature of the design, which makes it different from others in both Niagara and Ontario.

People who skate like to travel to different communities to ride parks that offer a unique twist, he added. The park "will draw tourism to Port Colborne," he said, adding it will ultimately benefit the local economy.

Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott said construction of the park will likely draw youths from the West St. area, where youth activity has become a concern for some merchants and residents to Lock 8 Park where they can use the new facility.

"I'm hoping if we build it, they will go," Elliott said, confident the site will be used appropriately.

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■ **REV. ROBERT HURKMANS:** Church of Tap spreads gospel in pubs, halls, homes

Minister extends outreach

VICTORIA GRAY
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Rev. Robert Hurkmans wants to bring Christianity and culture closer together.

He does that in a few unconventional ways, but mostly he brings members of the community together outside the church to talk about Christianity and faith in settings people may be more comfortable with, such as pubs, their homes, halls and cafes.

"Culture is very different than it was when this beautiful, historical tradition was passed down and there will always be a place for conventional church on Sundays. But we can't expect people to come to us, we need to reach out to them in ways that make sense to them," he said. He got his start at St. Luke's Anglican Church in Burlington before he, his wife Sally and daughters Elena, Sophia, Petra and Georgia moved to Port Colborne.

Hurkmans, now 35, was assigned to the parish of St. James and St. Brendan Anglican Church in 2006 when the churches were amalgamating.

"That for us was an interesting thing. Usually when something like that is happening in the life of a church, it means there's probably a willingness to really start thinking in new ways because they're shutting down the churches," he said. "The great line is 'We've always done it that way,' but if you're closing two churches and creating a new one you really can't say that anymore because, in some ways, you've left the past behind and you're going to start something new."

Hurkmans's grew up in Fisherville, a small agri-



Rev. Robert Hurkmans from the parish of St. James and St. Brendan Anglican Church likes to bring people closer to the faith in different ways.

VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo

cultural community 35 km northeast of Simcoe, and lived on a dairy farm with his father William, mother Elizabeth, two older sisters and younger brother. His family was very religious and Hurkmans was raised Anglican, although when he was young he didn't think the religion. In high school, he decided to follow his Anglican roots.

He became a high school chemistry teacher and, after a few years decided, to teach God's word as a minister.

Now, he runs Church on Tap, a group that meets at a pub the last Sunday night of every month at 7 p.m. to talk about religious issues. People usually watch a faith-based video and examine their faith in a safe and open environment.

"Some people don't like to come into a church — maybe, they have been hurt by the church — or just don't feel comfortable, so coming to the pub and having a drink and some food, talking of just listening is what's for them,"

he said.

He thinks some people have bad experiences at church, go through a divorce and feel ostracized from the church or have an argument with another parishioner and get hurt in many ways. Such experiences can turn them off church as a building, but Hurkmans hopes that by running different events he can eventually bring these people back or at least help them along their own faith journey.

He and volunteers also run a cafe in Guild Hall and run dances for teens and a crafters market on Fridays.

"We are about to go back and evaluate some of the services we offer to make sure that they focus on sharing the Gospel, but some things, like the Harvest Kitchen meals, I don't need to preach."

"Maybe one day, when people who have attended our events are looking for a church, they will think of us or maybe not and we've opened the door for another

church," he said.

None of the innovation or risks the church takes are Hurkmans' alone, there are many volunteers who help and all the parishioners get a say. He said if they don't like an idea or think it would hurt, they are the ones who really decide.

He credits the openness of the parishioners for the church's ability to try new things.

Hurkmans didn't preach at all over Lent instead five parishioners per service, who were largely unknown within the parish, were asked to answer five questions about their life and faith journey for everyone else.

"People have been on the edge of their seats, they love it," he said.

"We have a beautiful tradition that has been passed down to us throughout the centuries and we should be proud of it. I am proud of it, but we need to find other ways to reach out the community."

Hurkmans hopes to re-evaluate the rooftop garden at the church to see how the church can make better use of it and bring back the weekend movie theatre in Guild Hall.

He doesn't know what God has in store for him, but he has a feeling he is supposed to bring agriculture into the church somehow.

"I grew up on a farm and I hated it, but after living in the big city and moving here I found I'm a rural kind of guy and, funny enough, we just bought a farm, so I'm experimenting and I don't know how yet, but I think I want to tie that into the church as well," he said.

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Our view

Worst of Flaherty's budget almost Trudeauesque

When Finance Minister Jim Flaherty finished his budget speech Thursday, we half-expected to see NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair to be leading the cheering session.

This was not the budget Canadians anticipated from a Conservative government that finally had its majority. There were no deep cuts, as the left predicted. And there was no reflection of small-c-conservative values coming to the fore, no significant lessening of the civil service and no lessening of government spending.

At its best, it was a Progressive Conservative budget. At its worst, it was almost Trudeauesque.

Taking away tax credits for business, for example, is not small-conservative. A removed "credit" is an immediate "tax."

From the budget lockbox, however, one could hear the other penny drop when the huge CBC contingent discovered that, unlike other departments that had spending reduced by an across-the-board average of 7%, its budget lost only 0.3%.

This does not even represent the bare minimum of 5% that Flaherty was demanding all departments find. But they still despaired. In the year just ended, the Harper government had revenues of

\$240 billion and expenses of \$272.9 billion. Read the scroll: Global recession. Tough economic times.

During the next four years, however, this government plans to spend more each and every year.

By 2015-16, for example, it expects to spend \$296.6 billion, \$23.7 billion more than last year — all to be offset by a revenue moratorium of \$300 billion.

Projecting higher revenues, and pulling those numbers out of the air to cover off real spending increases, is no more than wishful thinking.

The government is predicting, for example, that the \$113.5 billion in personal income tax paid by Canadians last year will morph into \$150 billion in just four years — an increase of 31.5%. How is that possible?

But, hey, kudos to Sun News Network and Sun Media for pushing the government to demand rules be respected regarding foreign contributions to Canadian charities who then misuse this money for political causes. In effect, "charities" such as the David Suzuki Foundation get a re-mingled watchdog: The Canada Revenue Agency.

— QMI Agency

■ I'VE BEEN THINKING

REV. STEVEN DAVIS
Central United Church

I get the honour this year of offering some thoughts on what almost everybody would agree is the "highlight" weekend of the church year — Good Friday and Easter. I will be honest and admit that year after year I struggle with Good Friday and Easter — not because I don't understand them, but because it's hard to think of anything new or fresh that one can say about them. A few years ago, I realized that perhaps I had created my own problem. Maybe there's nothing new that can be said about Good Friday and Easter. Maybe everything that can be said has been said. Maybe trying to come up with things that are new and fresh and "exciting" actually downplay the significance of what actually happened. Maybe we just need to proclaim it — Jesus died and Jesus rose from death. There you have it. Good Friday and Easter summed up in a mere seven words!

Oh, I suppose it isn't quite as simple as that. If it were that simple everyone would believe it, and (sadly from my perspective at least) not everyone do. And I suspect that there's nothing I can write in the space of a short column that's going to convince someone who doesn't believe there's anything to suddenly embrace them. It's the Holy

■ readers' views

Don't stop with the cleaning staff

Hooray for Niagara Health System coming to its senses to find its own housekeeping staff is capable of cleaning our hospitals without the supervision of Aramark. But with all due respect, I don't think we should stop at housekeeping.

The dietary department is in need of review, also. This department is also under the direction of Aramark. Maybe dietary services, under the direct control of a taxpayer-funded hospital system, could change the "nutritious" meals to something that is actually edible. The glorified TV dinners our patients are getting at the moment are neither appealing nor received well by the patients.

Food has to be transported in a truck from the Welland site and travel as far as Fort Erie.

Packaged pudding and fruit, styrofoam cups and all the throw-away

containers are filling our landfills, while every hospital site has a perfectly good, working dishwasher.

With all the money saved by being directed by the specific hospital sites, there could be more jobs and much less waste for all the communities.

With respect, and despite whether or not a township council approves and passes a bylaw that may conflict with legislation passed by upper-level government, in this case the province, I would like to hear on what grounds anyone could ultimately find elected township councillors guilty of doing anything illegal in protecting the best interests of their residents, particularly with regard to negative public health impacts and negative economic impacts, both of which have been proven in other communities worldwide.

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Andrew Watts
Wainfleet

Thanks for Wainfleet council

I believe Wainfleet township council deserves thanks and congratulations for approving first and second reading of the bylaw regarding industrial wind turbines and their siting within the township. It is always a pleasant surprise today to see an administration at any level of government actively working to

see that the bonds of death (which to us seem so final) aren't final to God — which fills us with the hope that we too (with God's help) will overcome the bonds of death.

I believe I'm on safe ground in saying that the very existence of the church testifies more eloquently than I can to the truth of Jesus' resurrection. Not that the church is perfect. Far from it. Ever since its beginning the church has made mistakes and sometimes even engaged in evil. But at its best, the church is a noble and powerful institution — not financially or politically but in its ability to touch people's hearts and lift their spirits. But without the resurrection of Jesus, I doubt that the first believers — as harshly persecuted as they were — could have, without exception, stood firm in proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus unless it had really happened. Someone under torture would have cracked and said "I didn't happen. We made it up." No one did. You can be sure that if someone had, it would have been recorded by history.

So, it did happen — just as we read. It was the resurrection from dead. Good Friday and Easter. That's what this weekend is about. That's why the church celebrates its faith throughout the year — because Jesus lives, even though he died. So, hope you, too, can celebrate that fact! Happy Easter!

protect the best interests of those who elected them.

Wainfleet Council deserves not only the wholehearted support of its own community but also from the growing number of rural municipalities in Ontario affected by wind turbines.

With respect, and despite whether or not a township council approves and passes a bylaw that may conflict with legislation passed by upper-level government, in this case the province, I would like to hear on what grounds anyone could ultimately find elected township councillors guilty of doing anything illegal in protecting the best interests of their residents, particularly with regard to negative public health impacts and negative economic impacts, both of which have been proven in other communities worldwide.

Andrew Watts
Wainfleet

continued on page 5

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■ readers' views

FROM PAGE 4

Battle cry for two Niagaras

Kudos to Tribune community editorial board member Chris Wojnarowski for his well-researched article, where he outlined problems and solutions for restructuring the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

How has regional government worked for the southern tier since its inception in 1970? Ask anybody from Port Colborne, Port Erie or Welland and I bet you will hear a litany of complaints.

As Mr. Wojnarowski pointed out, since regional government was forc-

ibly injected, there was no longer a level playing board in the newly formed Region of Niagara, as the board tilted to the north and all the marbles landed in that direction.

People in the south are fed up. Most of them don't even know where the regional headquarters are.

Currently discussions are taking place to come up with a new formula for restructuring Niagara and the push from the north is for One Niagara, which we are told will be more efficient and economical. This process is being started by the regional chamber of commerce consolidating its empire in St. Catharines.

How is this going to level the playing field?

Our forefathers knew the entire Niagara Peninsula was too large to be governed under one system, especially when the system was controlled by one overpowering municipality.

The area comprising Niagara used to be made up of two counties, Welland and Lincoln counties. Since

amalgamation Welland County has gotten the short end of the stick, as outlined in Wojnarowski's article. I like his idea to adopt a two single-tier municipal system.

How about Two Niagaras? That should be our battle cry. If you agree with this concept, phone, e-mail or

write your mayor and/or councillors and tell them: "Let's talk about Two Niagaras."

Two Niagaras will also work much better for our hospital and health-care system.

Pat Schofield
Welland

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■ ENERGY PARK: OMB preparations underway

Time of essence for Nyon Oil matter

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE —
When reading through legal

documents and trying to
comprehend lengthy reports,
time is of the essence.

The proposed Ontario
Municipal Board hearing

for the Nyon Oil Inc. Port
Colborne Energy Park is in
September, and city council-
ors want to ensure enough
time is available for residents
to become well-informed of
the company's plans.

According to a report
issued by city staff, Nyon
has retained a consider-

able number of specialized
consultants to do specific
reviews of issues affecting
development of the proposed
energy park. These issues
have and will continue to
have impacts on the layout of
the proposed development's
components and their loca-
tion on site.

The city has requested
Nyon host a public presen-
tation to detail the project's
evolution, including a final
concept plan, no later than
June 15.

The company's vari-
ous consultant studies are
expected to be provided to
the city no later than May 20
— in time for an OMB pre-
hearing on May 28. The only
study not required will be an
environmental impact study,
which is not expected to be
completed until after the
September hearing.

Ward 4 Coun. Barbara
Butters asked that the dead-
line for report submission be
moved to May 15 to give resi-
dents a month to analyze the
reports prior to Nyon's final
presentation.

"My concern is for the
people who live there,"

Butters said of the devel-
opment area east of the
Welland Canal off Hwy. 140.
"I want to make sure they
have adequate time to review
these studies."

Once the documents are
reviewed, the public's input
will be provided to the city's
consultants to ensure the
issues brought forward are
addressed.

Chief administrative offi-
cer Bob Hell encouraged
council to leave the remain-
ing dates as is to ensure there
are no further delays in what
has already been a lengthy
process.

"The point of (the June 15
date) is to keep the pressure
on and not let it sit," he said
of the situation.

"This date holds their feet
to the fire and gets the stud-
ies done."

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■ **PLANNING:** Wainfleet council told it does not have the legal authority to impose setbacks

Wind turbine bylaw 'isn't lawful,' says lawyer

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — Aldermen approved the second reading

of a bylaw to regulate industrial wind turbines within Wainfleet — despite a warning that the bylaw is illegal.

Ed Lustig, a lawyer represent-

ing Rankin Renewable Power Inc., was at Tuesday's township council meeting to speak in opposition to the bylaw written to allow the municipality to determine

minimum residential setbacks for industrial wind turbines built in Wainfleet, and to require their builders to reimburse residents for any loss of property or ill health effects "to the extent of 100%."

Lustig said the township does not have the legal authority to enforce such a bylaw.

"It isn't lawful for the municipality to pass this bylaw," he told aldermen.

And although he assured councillors "I'm not here to threaten anyone," Lustig went on to warn aldermen that they would "attract expenses you wouldn't want to attract" if they tried to enforce it.

"There would be ramifications," he warned.

The bylaw did not specify the size of the setback that would be required if it receives final approval, but aldermen have been considering requiring a two-kilometre distance.

Lustig suggested aldermen voice their opposition to the province's Green Energy Act and the 550-metre setback for wind turbines it requires, by writing letters to the provincial

"There would be ramifications."

Ed Lustig, lawyer

government, lobbying against it, or voting against the current government, instead of approving a Wainfleet bylaw.

Ald. David Wyatt countered that the township could face lawsuits if residents experienced health problems as a result of living near wind turbines if the township took no action to protect them.

"We're in a precarious position," Wyatt said.

Lustig disagreed. He said provincial legislation has taken the authority to regulate wind turbines away from municipalities. For that reason, municipalities cannot be held responsible for not regulating them, he said.

Zijad Saskin, Lustig's colleague from Niagara Falls-based law firm Broderick and Partners LLP, was at the March 6 council meeting offering similar advice to aldermen regarding the proposed bylaw.

Asked if the township had obtained a legal opinion on the issue from its own solicitors, chief administrative officer Scott Luey said although the idea was discussed, township staff was not given direction to obtain legal advice on the bylaw.

Aldermen, without discussion, passed the second reading of the bylaw Tuesday. It will be considered for third and final reading at the April 10 council meeting.



Wyatt



Luey



A proposed bylaw to regulate industrial wind turbines within Wainfleet is being opposed by Rankin Renewable Power.

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Supplied photo
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■ **HEALTH CENTRE:** Non-profit organization to run wellness programming

YMCA coming to Port Colborne

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — There's no question, the Y is coming to Port Colborne.

On Monday night, city council unanimously approved the principles for the memorandum of agreement with the YMCA for programming of the warm side of the new Vale Health and Wellness Centre.

The decision was made following a March 21 open house where residents were able to ask questions and voice their comments and concerns about the potential partnership with the non-profit organization.

In total, 32 people provided written submissions — 21 in favour of the partnership and 11 sharing concerns all which were included for council's consideration on Monday.

While there were some negative comments received about the YMCA coming to Port Colborne, a majority of the feedback has been positive, said Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott.

"For me, I'll support this because this is the best option for the people in Port Colborne."

Elliott stressed the importance of having full use of the new facility once construction is completed, and "the Y gives us that."

For people concerned about the cost of membership, Elliott said the YMCA is "not afraid to work with people, to talk about cost."

Anyone unsure whether they can afford a membership is encouraged to visit with YMCA staff once the facility is up and running, he added.

Sitting on both the city's seniors advisory council and the mayor's youth advisory council, Ward 2 Coun. Ted Doucet said he's received feedback from residents on both ends of the city's age spectrum. While the senior community seems split, with some welcoming the YMCA while others are upset at the partnership, MYAC has thrown its support behind bringing the organization to town, he said.

MYAC submitted a letter to council featuring eight key points as to why

For me, I'll support this because this is the best option for the people in Port Colborne."

Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott

they support the YMCA partnership.

One of those points, Doucet said, included the fact that the partnership is one more step in helping Port Colborne to feel less like a retirement community.

This shows youths their opinions are being recognized, which is important for the future of the city, he added.

"I was torn for a while on how to support this," said Ward 3 Coun. Bea Kenny. Prior to the open house, Kenny said she heard nothing but negative comments about bringing the YMCA into the city. Since the open house, however, she heard nothing but positive comments.



Elliott



Desmarais

It was ultimately a visit to the MacBain Community Centre in Niagara Falls that tipped the scale for Kenny, who called the amenities offered at the YMCA-run facility "fantastic."

Despite supporting the partnership, she did have reservations about a few issues, including the absence of a reduced rate for therapeutic pool users, as well as the effect that introducing the YMCA's fitness centre may have on locally owned and operated G&M Fitness.

Ward 2 Coun. Angie Desmarais admitted she was also torn by the decision as she had heard both positive and negative feedback from the public.

She had three conditions that she hoped to see met through discussions between the two groups, including the creation of a senior swim rate, guaranteed employment for existing pool staff and support for G&M Fitness because the city is ultimately making the company's competition tougher.

"The overwhelming majority want this," Desmarais said of the partnership, adding it's "the right thing to do but we want to do it with fairness."

Ward 4 Coun. Barbara Butters questioned whether Port Colborne's economic development office, tasked with retaining existing businesses in the lakeside city, could assist G&M Fitness through the "difficult transformation time" ahead.

She asked that the office work with the local business to see what type of support can be offered.

■ EDUCATION: Playwright and actor brings laughter to language



LINDSAY COSTELLO InPort News Photo

Toronto-based actor and playwright Coleen MacPherson presented her workshop, *Let's Write*, to fifth- and sixth-grade students at Steele Street Elementary School this past week. She participated in dramatic exercises and taught script writing from Monday to Friday.

Learning the write stuff

LINDSAY COSTELLO
For InPort News

PORT COLBORNE — Language and laughter were part of the curriculum this past week as Steele Street Elementary School welcomed a special guest.

Toronto-based playwright and actor Coleen MacPherson, who obtained a grant to provide workshops to elementary students brought her program, *Let's Write*, to Port Colborne students beginning March 26.

"These kids are extremely imaginative and willing to share ideas," she said of her experience with the children who she explored writing and dramatic arts concepts with. "It's been great."

Working with the fifth and sixth grade classes, MacPherson taught the basics of scriptwriting to about 60 students and touched on a variety of skills and subject matter as groups worked to develop their own stories.

"It engages them (the students) and it really augments the learning and makes it meaningful," said teacher Sara de Waard Kent of the hands-on and interactive classroom activities experienced.

Steele Street is one of six Ontario schools that have participated in MacPherson's script-writing workshop. The Ontario Art's Council provided the grant with additional funding from the DSSB, the learning experience was at no cost to students.

Each day began with a warm-up exercise to get the creative juices flowing before students broke off into

groups to work on their drafts. At the end of the week, the students staged some of their creations and received an anthology of the student scripts.

Although her class often goes on field trips, de Waard said this week was one of the first times students had worked with a guest in the classroom.

She said aside from working on academic skills, the students are able to improve their social skills and become more self-aware as well, which she felt were important concepts for young people to grasp.

"It's engaging every student," she said.

MacPherson said she noticed the students' growth as the week progressed and helped them to draw on their own experiences when writing scenes for their scripts.

She said it was important for them to understand the aspects of story writing such as the conflict and climax and for stories to have a beginning, middle and end. Not only were these elements important but also character development and the parallels between the characters and real life.

"You can learn from different perspectives," said Grade 5 student Macy Nagy-Liskiy, who enjoys having guests in the classroom.

Brody Crawford, also in fifth grade, said he was a fan of the drama exercises.

"It's fun," he said.

MacPherson has taken her program throughout the province but said she would like to return to the region in the future.

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Michelle Pressé
CANADIAN
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loneliness, don't be. Learn to be your own best friend and embrace your own company.

On the other hand, traveling alone can actually make a person more outgoing.

see **PRESSÉ** | page 15



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■ **PRESSÉ**

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FORM PAGE 14

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Michelle Pressé is an 18-year-old Port Colborne resident living and working in Rome, Italy, until June 2012. She is a Lakeshore Catholic graduate who hopes to pursue her journalism degree next fall.



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